

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Platinum Jubilee Civic Honours Competition for Lord Mayoralty

16 September 2021

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To enable the Committee to consider whether the Council should respond to an invitation from the Minister of State to enter a competition for a Lord Mayoralty.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) The Committee's views are sought as to whether the Council should submit an application for Lord Mayoralty. If the Committee supports the submission of an application, it should recognise that such support must embrace a commitment for the Council to invest financially in the enhanced profile of the mayoralty should the application be successful.**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A letter has been received from the Minister of State, advising that as part of the 2022 Platinum Jubilee celebrations, two competitions are being run for councils. One is for an award of city status, and the other, of interest to this council, is for existing city councils to apply for a Lord Mayoralty. Only one application will be successful in each category.
- 1.2 The style "lord mayor" is conferred by Her Majesty the Queen under the royal prerogative. It is an exceptional distinction conferred on the Mayoralities of a few – unusually long-established and important – cities.
- 1.3 The deadline for applications is the 8th of December 2021, and details of the application process and the supporting information required to be submitted are appended to this report.
- 1.4 The Council submitted applications for a Lord Mayoralty in 1986, 1991, 2001 and 2011, but was unsuccessful on each occasion.

2.0 Proposal Details

- 2.1 The Committee's views are sought as to whether the Council should submit an application on this occasion. Clearly there can be no guarantee that such an application would be successful, as it is likely that many councils will apply, and only one will be successful. If it were successful, this would be a great civic honour for the Council, and could substantially enhance the Council's profile and reputation, and boost the visitor economy. However, if the Council were to have a Lord Mayor, this would require a commitment to a substantially higher mayoral budget than at present to reflect the status and profile of a Lord Mayor.
- 2.2 Should the Council wish to submit an application, the preparatory work would be led by the Head of Democratic Services, but input would be required from all other Services to provide the relevant information about the Council's area which would be needed to support the application. Details of the contents of the submission required are set out in the appendix.

3.0 Details of Consultation

- 3.1 There has been no consultation. The purpose of this report is to seek members' views as to whether they would wish the Council to submit an application.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

	Option 1: To submit an application	Option 2: Not to submit an application
Advantages	If the application were successful, this would be an immense civic honour for the Council and could raise the profile of the Council significantly. This is a rare opportunity to apply for a Lord Mayoralty, and Members may consider that the opportunity should be grasped.	Staff resources would be devoted to other projects which match with the Council's priorities.
Disadvantages	Applications in previous years have failed. There is no guarantee that this application would be successful, and the work required to prepare an application might be abortive, when scarce resources could be devoted.	Loss of opportunity which could enhance the Council's reputation and status. Opportunities to make an application for Lord Mayoralty are rare.
Risks	If the application were successful, the Council would be committed to setting a costly Mayoral budget every year in order to reflect the status and profile of a Lord Mayor.	Possible loss of reputation, through giving the impression that the Council does not seek civic honour for the district.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The Committee's instructions are sought.

**CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT
(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety,
Sustainability and Rural Proofing):**

None directly arising from this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications. As a city council, the Council is entitled to submit an application for Lord Mayoralty.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There would be resource implications in preparing an application submission, in that officers from all Services would be required to provide statistics, information and photographs to meet the guidelines that have been set out by the government for applications. However, such information should be available and would simply need collation, and it is felt that this could be done using existing staff resources although it must be recognised that it is inevitable that time spent on preparing the submission will mean that time is not available for other projects which the Council has prioritised.

The Council already faces budgetary pressures. Should the Council submit a successful bid, there would be financial implications for the future, in that a Lord Mayoralty would have a higher profile than the existing Mayoralty, and would need to be supported by a higher budget than the existing budget. At this stage it is not possible to quantify what such budget requirements might be, but it is essential that the Council should recognise that, if time is to be invested in submitting an application, there must be a commitment to providing the appropriate financial support in the future for an enhanced mayoralty, should the application be successful.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Human Resources:

Should the Committee decide to make a competition entry, it is intended that the work on the application would be undertaken through existing staff resources in Democratic Services, with support from Economic Growth and Regeneration (particularly Communications, Marketing and Tourism) to provide the information required for the application. This would inevitably mean diverting staff resources from other tasks and would be subject to other priorities within those Services.

Information Services:

None

Property:

None

Open Spaces:

None

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

Members are advised to consider the need for increased financial commitment attached to

submitting a bid, in the context of Council priorities, financial prospects and value for money

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Letter from Lord True CBE, Minister of State - 8 June 2021
- Entry Guidelines

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